

September 2014

Follow @Paul_Hastings



New EU Antitrust Commissioner, Margrethe Vestager, to Take Office in November 2014, Pending Approval

BY [MICHAEL P.A. COHEN](#) & [JOSSELIN J. LUCAS](#)¹

A New EU Commissioner for Antitrust and Competition

Denmark's former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Economic and Interior Affairs, **Margrethe Vestager**, is set to become the European Union's next Commissioner for Competition which heads the Directorate-General for Competition, located in Brussels, and its 700 employees. Ms. Vestager was appointed on 10 September 2014 by the President-elect of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker.

Ms. Vestager, 46 years old, is an economist, and will take over from incumbent Joaquin Almunia for a term of five years. The new European Commission will officially take office after the European Parliament has approved of Jean-Claude Juncker's team and is expected to start work on **1 November 2014**.

Although her personal agenda as EU Commissioner for Competition will become clearer during her hearing at the European Parliament, expected to take place between 29 September 2014 and 9 October 2014, Ms. Vestager has already received a set of top priorities from Jean-Claude Juncker.

New EU Antitrust Commissioner's Priorities

In a Mission Letter sent by Jean-Claude Juncker on 10 September 2014, the new EU Antitrust Commissioner has been asked to **focus on the following aspects**:

- Mobilizing competition policy tools and market expertise so that they contribute, as appropriate, to the jobs and growth agenda, including in areas such as the digital single market, energy policy, financial services, industrial policy, and the fight against tax evasion.
- Pursuing an effective enforcement of competition rules in the areas of antitrust and cartels, mergers and State aid, maintaining competition instruments aligned with market developments, as well as promoting a competition culture in the EU and world-wide.
- Maintaining and strengthening the Commission's reputation world-wide and promoting international cooperation.

Future Agenda

Ms. Vestager will have to address a number of on-going competition matters, especially the **Google investigation** on its specialized search services and online advertising, the **Gazprom**

investigation on its supplies of natural gas to the EU, and investigations on **banks** regarding credit derivatives.

The **extension of the scope of application of the EU Merger Regulation to non-controlling minority shareholdings** will be a significant item on her agenda.

As for antitrust damages actions, there is no doubt that the new EU Commission will monitor the implementation by the Member States of the European Union of **the EU Directive on antitrust damages actions** adopted on 17 April 2014 by the European Parliament.

◇ ◇ ◇

If you have any questions concerning these developing issues, please do not hesitate to contact any of the following Paul Hastings lawyers:

Paris/Brussels

Pierre Kirch
Paris: 33.1.42.99.04.23
Brussels: 32.2.641.74.60
pierrekirch@paulhastings.com

Josselin J. Lucas
Paris: 33.1.42.99.04.31
Brussels: 32.2.641.7460
josselinlucas@paulhastings.com

Washington, D.C.

Michael P.A. Cohen
1.202.551.1880
michaelcohen@paulhastings.com

C. Scott Hataway
1.202.551.1731
scotthataway@paulhastings.com

MJ Moltenbrey
1.202.551.1725
mjmoltenbrey@paulhastings.com

¹ The views expressed by the authors in this article are their own and not those of Paul Hastings LLP or any of its clients.

Paul Hastings LLP

StayCurrent is published solely for the interests of friends and clients of Paul Hastings LLP and should in no way be relied upon or construed as legal advice. The views expressed in this publication reflect those of the authors and not necessarily the views of Paul Hastings. For specific information on recent developments or particular factual situations, the opinion of legal counsel should be sought. These materials may be considered ATTORNEY ADVERTISING in some jurisdictions. Paul Hastings is a limited liability partnership. Copyright © 2014 Paul Hastings LLP.